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CITY OF GREENVILLE

POLICY NO. HR-18

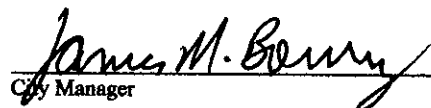
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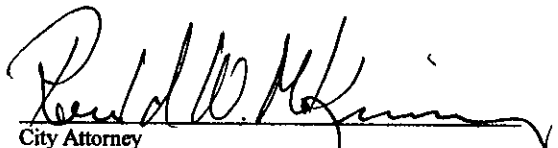
SUBJECT: Code of Ethics

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APPROVALS:


City Manager


City Attorney


Human Resources Director

I. **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to establish professional, responsible, and ethical behavior in the administration of local government. It describes actions that are incompatible with the best interests of the City and directs disclosure of any private financial or other interests which might directly or indirectly affect the City.

This policy on ethics shall apply in all instances covered by its provisions except when superseded by applicable provisions of State statutes or City ordinances.

II. **Scope**

This policy shall apply to all classified public employees of the City of Greenville.

III. **Policy**

This policy requires that public employees must be committed to:

- * independence and impartiality in their judgment and actions;
- * making government decisions and policy within the proper channels of the governmental structure;
- * honesty in handling public funds and in the conservation of public property, never using any public funds or property for private benefit;
- * promoting public confidence in the integrity of City government and its public servants;
- * eliminating any actual or potential conflict of interest; and
- * complying with all policies governing employee conduct.

IV. **Procedures**

A. **Responsibilities of Public Office**

All public employees hold office for the benefit of the public. They are bound to uphold the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of this state and to carry out with impartiality the laws of the nation, state and municipality. They are bound, in their official acts, to observe the highest standards of morality and to discharge faithfully the duties of their offices, regardless of personal considerations, recognizing that the public interest must be their primary concern. Their conduct should be above reproach at all times.

B. Dedicated Service

Public employees shall adhere to the rules of work and performance established as the standards for their positions.

Public employees shall not exceed their authority, breach the law or ask others to do so, and they shall work in full cooperation with other public officials, public members and public employees unless prohibited from doing so by law, recognizing that personal private interests must always be subordinate to the public interest.

C. Fair and Equal Treatment

1. *Interest in Appointments.* Canvassing members of the Council, directly or indirectly, in order to obtain preferential consideration in connection with any appointment to municipal service shall disqualify the candidate for appointment, except for positions filled by Council appointment.
2. *Use of Public Property.* Public employees shall not use or permit the use of City-owned vehicles, equipment, materials, or property for personal convenience or profit, except when such services are available to the public generally, or are specifically provided for use by such public employees in the conduct of official business.
3. *Obligations to Citizens.* Public employees shall not grant any special consideration, treatment, or advantage to any citizen beyond that which is available to every other citizen.

D. Conflict of Interest

Public employees shall not engage in any business or financial transaction or have a personal interest, direct or indirect, which is incompatible with the proper discharge of official duties in the public interest or that would tend to impair their independence of judgment or action in the performance of their official duties. Personal interest includes an interest arising from blood or marriage relationship, or close business or political association, or close friendship. In such instances, they shall disclose to their department head or to the City Manager by memo or by other appropriate document, such involvement, or disqualify themselves from acting in an official capacity on the matter, or both.

Special conflicts of interest are listed below for the guidance of public employees.

1. *Incompatible Employment.* Public employees shall not engage in or accept private employment or render services for private interests when such employment or service is incompatible with the proper discharge of their official duties or would tend to impair their independence of judgment or action in the performance of their official duties.
2. *Disclosure of Confidential Information.* Public employees shall not, without proper legal authorization, disclose confidential information concerning the property, government, or affairs of the City, nor shall they use such information to advance the financial or other private interest of themselves or others.
3. *Gifts and Favors.* Public employees shall not accept any thing of value, whether in the form of service, loan, thing, or promise, from any person, firm, or corporation which is interested, directly or indirectly, in any manner whatsoever in business dealings with the City; nor shall any public employees (1) accept any thing of value that may tend to influence them in the discharge of their duties, or (2) grant in the discharge of their duties any improper favor, service or thing of value (3) or be involved in any situation

that may give the appearance of impropriety. For purposes of this policy, “thing of value” shall have the same meaning as provided in the South Carolina Ethics Act as from time to time amended.

4. *Representing Private Interests Before City Agencies or Courts.* Public employees whose salary is paid in whole or in part by the City shall not appear on behalf of private interests before any agency of the City. They shall not represent private interests in any action or proceeding against the interests of the City in any litigation to which the City is a party.

Public employees may not appear before city agencies on behalf of constituents or as representatives of the citizens, unless such appearance is in the scope of duties of an employee=s position. Furthermore, no public employee shall accept a retainer or compensation that is contingent upon a specific action by a city agency.

Public employees shall not speak about City matters in connection with another organization, unless approved by the proper authority.

5. *Contracts with the City.* Any public employee who has a substantial or controlling financial interest in any business entity, transaction, or contract with the City, or in the sale of real estate, materials, supplies, or services to the City, shall make known to the proper authority such interest in any matter on which he may be called to act in his official capacity. The employee shall refrain from participating in the transaction or the making of such contract or sale.

A public employee shall not be deemed to have an interest in any contract or purchase or sale of land or other thing of value if such transaction is unrelated to the employee=s position or job responsibilities and the transaction is conducted in accord with standard procurement processes.

6. Disclosure: Public employees shall disclose all sources of income which may represent, or appear to represent, a conflict of interest with official duties, and shall disclose the nature and extent of any financial interest in a business entity that may engage in any transaction with the City.

Any public employee who has a financial or other private interest, and who participates in discussion with or gives an official opinion to the council, shall disclose, in writing, on the records of the council or other appropriate authority, the nature and extent of such interest.

E. Annual State Filing.

Employees are reminded that some may be required by state law to file a "Statement of Economic Interest" with the State Ethics Commission. Employees should consult with the City Clerk or the City Attorney for advice on whether to file.

F. Political Activity

The restrictions of this section are designed to protect every public employee's right to vote and to keep this right free from interference, solicitation or dictation by any fellow public employee, supervisor, or official..

Public employees shall not use the prestige of their position on behalf of any political candidate, faction or party. .

Public employees shall not take part in any manner, other than voting, in municipal political campaigns, nor shall such public employees become candidates for municipal political elections.

Public employees shall not promise an appointment to any municipal position as a reward for any political activity.

G. Questions About the Policy

When any public employees have questions on any provision of this policy, they should

request an opinion of the City Manager and be guided by the advice provided.

H. Sanctions for Policy Violations

Violation of this policy by any public employee may result in disciplinary action, including termination, depending on the severity of a single violation or pattern of violations.